Amendments to the Claims

A complete listing of the claims follows. Please amend claims 1, 2, 8, 11, 12, 17, 20, 21, 27, 30, 31, 35, 38, 39, 40, 47, 48, 49 and 53. Please cancel claims 43, 45, 52 and 54. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A method of generating a data string representing the contents of a media element, the method comprising:

identifying a media element, the media element having a plurality of pixels ~~components~~;

determining a first ~~component~~ pixel value for one or more of the plurality of the pixels ~~components~~ within the media element;

identifying a subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~, each having a ~~component~~ pixel value substantially similar to the first ~~component~~ pixel value;

determining a set of relationships among the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~; and

generating a data string for said media element in response to the determined relationships.

2. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the media element is one of a video clip, static photograph, JPEG image, animation, ~~audio clip,~~ and text.

3. (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein identifying the media element comprises selecting the media element and loading the media element into a memory of a computer system.

4. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 3, wherein loading the media

element into the memory comprises downloading the media element over a network connection.

5. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising determining if the media element can be compressed and, if so, compressing.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the set of relationships is based on relative distances among the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 38, further comprising generating a histogram band for each of the plurality of pixel ~~component~~ values for the one or more pixels ~~components~~ within the media element.

12. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 40, further comprising adjusting the tolerance such that the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~ includes a minimum number of pixels ~~components~~.

13. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning a label to the media element.

14. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 13, wherein the label is used as a reference pointer to the data string.

15. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 42, wherein indexing the media element comprises comparing the data string for the media element to the data strings associated with the reference media elements.

16. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 42, further comprising displaying a result of the indexing to a user.

17. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the subset of the plurality of the pixels ~~components~~ is selected from a predetermined area of the media element.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 13, further comprising retrieving the media element using the assigned label.

20. (Currently Amended): A system for generating a data string representing the contents of a media element, the system comprising:

a processor;

a memory coupled to the processor, the memory containing instruction sequences to cause the processor to:

identify a media element, the media element having a plurality of pixels ~~components~~;

determine a first ~~component~~ pixel value for one or more of the plurality for the ~~components~~ pixels within a media element;

identify a subset of the plurality of ~~components~~ pixels, each having a ~~component~~ pixel value substantially similar to the first ~~component~~ pixel value;

determine a set of relationships among the subset of the plurality of ~~components~~ pixels; and

generate a data string for said media element, in response to the determined relationships.

21. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 20, wherein the media element is one of a video clip, static photograph, JPEG image, animation, ~~audio clip,~~ and text.

22. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 20, wherein the instruction sequences further comprise instructions to cause the processor to select the media element and to load the media element into the memory.

23. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 22, wherein the media element is loaded into the memory by downloading the media element over a network connection.

24. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 20, wherein the memory further includes instruction sequences to cause the processor to determine if the media element can be compressed and, if so, to compress the media element.

25. (Cancelled)

26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 20, wherein the set of relationships is based on relative distances between among the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 47, wherein the instruction sequences further cause the processor to:

generate a histogram band for each of the plurality of ~~component~~ pixel values for the one or more components of the media element.

31. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 48, where the instruction sequences is further to,

adjust the tolerance such that the subset of the plurality of ~~components~~ pixels includes a minimum number of pixels ~~components~~.

32. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 20, where the memory further includes instructions sequences to cause the processor to assign a label to the media element.

33. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 32, wherein the label is used as a reference pointer to the data string.

34. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 51, wherein the instruction sequences further include instructions to:

compare the data string for the media element to the data strings associated with the reference media elements.

35. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 20, wherein the subset of the plurality of the ~~components~~ pixels is selected from a predetermined area of the media element.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 32 wherein said instruction

sequences further cause the processor to retrieve the media element using the assigned label.

38. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising determining a second ~~plurality of component~~ pixel value[[s]] for each of the pixels in the subset of the plurality of pixels~~components~~.

39. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a tolerance level for the first pixel ~~component~~ value.

40. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 39 wherein each pixel ~~component~~ in the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~ has a pixel ~~component~~ value within the tolerance level of the first pixel ~~component~~ value.

41. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1 further comprising providing one or more reference media elements, each reference media element having an associated data string.

42. (Previously Presented): The method of claim 41 further comprising indexing the media element in response to the generated data string and one or more of the data strings associated with the one or more reference media elements.

43. (Cancelled):

44. (Currently Amended): The method of claim 43 wherein ~~the components are pixels, and~~ the first pixel ~~component~~ value comprises one of a color value, a brightness value, a texture value, a fog value, ~~or~~ and a chrominance value.

45. (Cancelled):

46. (New): The method of claim 19 further comprising displaying the retrieved media element.

47. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 20 wherein the instruction sequences further cause the processor to determine a ~~plurality of~~ second pixel ~~component~~ value[[s]] for the each of the pixels in the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~.

48. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 20 wherein the instruction sequences further cause the processor to determine a tolerance level for the first pixel ~~component~~ value.

49. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 48 wherein each pixel ~~component~~ in the subset of the plurality of pixels ~~components~~ has a pixel ~~component~~ value within the tolerance level of the first pixel ~~component~~ value.

50. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 20 wherein the memory further comprises one or more reference media elements, each reference media element having an associated data string.

51. (Previously Amended): The system of claim 50 wherein the instruction sequences further cause the processor to index the media element in response to the generated data string and one or more of the data strings associated with the reference media elements.

52. (Cancelled):

53. (Currently Amended): The system of claim 52 wherein ~~the components are pixels, and~~ the first pixel ~~component~~ value comprises one of a color value, a brightness value, a texture value, a fog value, ~~or~~ and a chrominance value.

54. (Cancelled):

55. (Previously Presented): The system of claim 37 wherein the instruction sequences further cause the processor to display the retrieved media element.